

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method for facilitating the transfer of back-up copies of one or more files from a first computer to a second computer; comprising:

designating files from the first computer for which back-up copies will be transferred to the second computer;

selectively transferring the designated files and file data from the first computer to the second computer via a communication network or from the first computer to a portable computer readable medium based on a total size of the files being transferred;

receiving, at the second computer, the selectively transferred files and file data, wherein said received file data includes authentication data for determining whether the first computer is authorized to store back-up copies on the second computer; and

storing, at the second computer, the received files when the first computer is determined to be authorized.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the designated files and file data are transferred from the first computer to a portable computer readable medium when the total size of the files to be transferred is greater than a target amount, said target amount defined by a user of the first computer.

3. The method of claim 2 further including:

delivering the portable computer readable medium to a user of the destination computer; and

transferring the files from the delivered portable computer readable medium to the second computer for storage.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein designating files includes displaying a first input form on a display linked to the first computer, said first input form receiving input data from a

user, and said input data designating the one or more files to be copied and transferred to the portable computer readable medium.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein first transferring files include encrypting the designated files prior to transferring the designated files to the portable computer readable medium.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein transferring files includes transferring authentication data to the portable computer readable medium.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the receiving includes retrieving first authentication data from the portable computer readable medium and retrieving second authentication data from the second computer, wherein said first authentication data defines a first password and said second authentication data defines a second password, and comparing the first password to the second password to determine if the passwords match, and wherein the one or more files are stored on the second computer if the first and second passwords are determined to match.

8. The method of claim 7 further including:

retrieving, at the second computer, a first identification tag from the portable computer readable medium, said identification tag being randomly generated by the first computer to identify the one or more files to be transferred from the portable computer readable medium to the second computer;

sending an authentication request including the first identification tag to the first computer via the communication network;

receiving, at the first computer, the authentication request and the first identification tag;

comparing, at the first computer, the received first identification tag with an second identification tag being stored on the originating computer to determine if the tags match, wherein the second identification tag corresponds to a tag previously generated by

the first computer to identify a particular file or particular set files being transferred to a portable computer readable medium;

requesting, at the first computer, input from an originating user to confirm back-up is authorized if there is a matching tag;

sending a reply including the user input to the second computer via the communication network; and

determining whether the first computer is authorized as a function of the user input included in the reply.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein storing files includes retrieving storage amount data and file storage data from a destination database, said storage amount data defining a maximum amount of storage space available on the second computer for storing files transferred from the first computer, and said file storage data specifying a current amount of storage space on the second computer being used for storing files from the first computer, and wherein storing files further comparing the storage amount data to file storage data to determine if storage space is available, and wherein the back-up copies of the one or more designated files stored on the portable computer readable medium are stored on the second computer if storage space is determined to be available.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein designating files for transfer further includes:

designating a destination identifier associated with the second computer;

designating storage schedule data for back-up copies; and

storing the back-up copies of the designated one or more files, the designated destination identifier, and/or the designated storage schedule data in an originating database.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein designating files includes displaying a first input form on a display linked to the first computer, said first input form receiving input data from a user, and said input data designating the one or more files to be copied and transferred to the second computer, designating the one or more back-up times, and/or designating the destination identifier.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

retrieving one or more stored files from the second computer in response to a request received from the originating user;

transferring the retrieved files to the portable computer medium; and

delivering the portable computer medium to the originating user.

13. A method for facilitating the transfer of back-up copies of one or more files from a first computer to a second computer; comprising:

designating files from the first computer for which back-up copies will be transferred to the second computer;

identifying a location of the second computer;

transferring the files from the verified first computer to a portable computer readable medium;

selectively delivering the portable computer readable medium to a user of the destination computer based on an amount of data in the one or more files to be transferred, wherein the portable computer readable medium is physically delivered to the destination user when the amount of data to be transferred is greater than or equal to a target amount, and wherein the one or more files are transferred from the first computer to the second computer via a communication network when the amount of data to be transferred is less than the target amount.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the originating user determines the target amount.